


# FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL

## POLICY MANUAL

	<b>SUBJECT</b> FIREARMS QUALIFICATION	<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> 10.03
	<b>APPLICABLE CALEA STANDARDS</b> 1.3.10, 1.3.11, 16.3.6, 33.1.5, 33.5.1	<b>ISSUE DATE</b> 02/01/96
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### 10.03.01 PURPOSE

To delineate procedures for completion of firearms qualification requirements.

### 10.03.02 POLICY

It is the policy of the Florida Highway Patrol to provide regular training in firearms safety, shooting and to require its officers to demonstrate proficiency in firearms use.

### 10.03.03 OBJECTIVES

- A. To establish a firearms training program for the Florida Highway Patrol.
- B. To promote firearms safety and proficiency.
- C. To promulgate performance standards pertaining to firearms qualification.
- D. To identify qualifications demanded of firearms instructors.

### 10.03.04 PROCEDURES

#### A. QUALIFICATIONS FOR FIREARMS INSTRUCTORS

1. The members chosen as troop firearms instructor and assistant troop firearms instructor shall have completed the Florida Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission Firearms Instructor's course. Members who were certified as firearms instructors prior to the 1986, implementation of the Criminal Justice Standards Training Firearms Instructor's course may continue to serve as firearms instructors.
2. Members who wish to serve as assistant firearms instructors at the Florida Highway Patrol Training Academy must be certified by the Florida Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission. This requires that the member possess both the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission "Curriculum Maintenance System (CMS) Firearms Instructor's" certificate and the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission "Curriculum Maintenance System (CMS) General Instructor's" certification.

B. HANDGUN MARKSMANSHIP QUALIFICATION COURSE

1. The Division's policy for earning and retaining marksmanship badges is as follows:

- a. The initial qualification and classification will be determined in recruit training school. The classification will be based on the following:

SEMI-AUTOMATIC 45 ROUND COURSE

Unclassified	Below 80%
Marksman	80 – 84%
Sharpshooter	85 – 89%
Expert	90 – 94%
Master	95 – 99%
Distinguished	100%

- b. A score made in any one shoot can raise the classification of the shooter. However, the higher classification will not be permanent until the shooter has fired the higher score twice in consecutive matches.
- c. The officer in charge of firearms training in each troop will maintain a master file of classification, both temporary and permanent, and will advise the Troop Commander of all changes in qualifications so that the trooper will be issued the proper qualification badge.
- d. Each troop will maintain a computerized record of the firearms annual qualification scores and dates for all sworn members of the troop.
  - (1) Each troop shall establish by computer the names of all sworn members of the troop. The scores and dates of the annual qualification shall be maintained in the computer record for both service weapons and shotguns.
  - (2) No later than July 15 of each year, a computer printout covering the current year's troop firearms report is to be sent to the Florida Highway Patrol Training Academy. The printout shall be a complete, alphabetical listing of all sworn members, reserve members, and auxiliary members reflecting the score and date of qualification. This printout will show a blank space for the score of any one who did not attend a qualification session.

- (3) The Training Academy shall file the printouts by troop and shall be responsible for ensuring that these printouts are received. The Training Academy shall also be responsible for maintaining a file on those members who failed to attend a qualification session and/or qualify.
  - (4) The Training Academy shall forward a report no later than the last working day of each July to the Director identifying the name, troop and reason the person(s) failed to attend a qualification session and/or qualify. A copy of this report will be forwarded to the appropriate Deputy Director to ensure that proper follow-up is conducted.
- e. During firearms qualification on the range, each course will use the hot range procedure and all weapons will be considered loaded at all times. All loading and unloading will be accomplished while keeping weapons pointed safely downrange.
  - f. Shooters experiencing a malfunction with their ammunition or a weapon that does not respond to immediate action to clear or remedy the problem, will keep the weapon pointed in a safe downrange direction and raise their hand to indicate same to the range officer, who will then initiate appropriate action. All alibi's or re-fires must be approved by the range officer.
  - g. Duty ammunition for the service weapons will be used. In the event more than one qualification course is fired, practice ammunition shall be used for the second and subsequent attempts. New ammunition shall be issued at the end of the course for duty use.
  - h. All firing for the semi-automatic shall be double action for the first shot and single action for each subsequent shot within that string of fire.
  - i. While participating in Division firearms qualification and/or training, all members shall utilize Division issued or equivalent, eye and ear protection.

#### C. FIREARM QUALIFICATION AND TRAINING

- 1. Training Academy recruits and FHP Auxiliary recruits must successfully pass the firearms qualifications course established by the Florida Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission.
- 2. For members, reserve members and auxiliary members, the FHP Training Academy will establish qualification courses for each type of firearm issued or authorized to be carried by members. The qualification course for the service handgun shall meet, at a

minimum, the CJSTC mandated qualifications course for active law enforcement officers. Each course must be approved by the Director and must contain at a minimum the following:

- a. A detailed outline of each stage of fire including:
    - (1) Distance from target(s).
    - (2) Number of rounds fired in each sequence.
    - (3) Number of sequences fired in each stage.
    - (4) Training objective for the stage of fire.
    - (5) Amount of time allowed for each sequence of fire.
    - (6) Which target(s) to be fired upon if multiple targets are present.
    - (7) Beginning and firing position.
  - b. Type of target(s) to be used.
  - c. How targets are to be scored.
  - d. Whether the scoring of the course will be by pass/fail or numerical score. If a numerical score is used, the minimum passing score will be stated.
  - e. The course of fire should be designed to accommodate the ammunition capacity of the firearm and extra magazines, if applicable.
3. Annual firearms qualifications shall be completed by April 30<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year.
- a. A list of dates that firearms qualifications will be conducted shall be published for each round of qualifications. This list shall include at least one make-up session for members, reserve members and auxiliary members unable to attend the regularly scheduled dates. Qualification sessions for reserve and auxiliary members may be held separate from full-time members. A qualification session is defined as firearms training that is scheduled for a specific location, date, and time. A qualification period is defined as the designated period of time when all qualification sessions, including the make-up session, are conducted. A qualification period should not exceed a 5-week period.
  - b. Every member, reserve member, and auxiliary member must attend and participate in a firearms qualification session each year.

- c. Following the end of the last qualification session, including published make-up sessions, the firearms instructor shall forward a list of members, reserve members and auxiliary members who did not attend any qualification session to the Troop Commander.
  - d. Any member who does not attend a firearms qualification session by April 30<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year shall be placed on alternate duty in accordance with DHSMV Management Manual Policy #3.03. Members affected by these provisions shall not be permitted to return to full duty until they have qualified with the service handgun and qualified or demonstrated proficiency with any other weapon included in the regularly scheduled qualification session.
  - e. Members on alternate duty shall not be authorized to operate a patrol vehicle or wear the FHP uniform.
  - f. Reserve members and Sworn Auxiliary members who do not attend a firearms qualification session shall not be permitted to wear the uniform or participate in any activity that requires law enforcement authority until they have qualified with the service handgun and demonstrated proficiency with any other weapon included in the regularly scheduled qualification sessions.
  - g. The qualification requirement set forth in "D" below shall be followed in the above listed qualifications sessions.
- 4. The service handgun qualification shall include low light firearms training using the approved course of fire. The low light score will not be used as an annual qualification score.
  - 5. Between July 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year sworn, reserve, and auxiliary member shall receive firearms training on each of the firearms they are authorized to carry. The training shall include live-fire stress, tactical, and/or shoot/don't shoot courses.

#### D. FAILURE TO QUALIFY

##### 1. Service Handgun

Any member who fails to achieve a qualifying score during a firearms qualification session shall attend a remedial training session. The remedial training will commence the following work day or whenever the firearms range becomes available. However, remedial training will be conducted no later than 30 days after the member fails to achieve a qualifying score with his or her service handgun. The remedial training will be conducted by either a certified troop firearms instructor or a certified Training Academy firearms instructor. Remedial training is designed to provide specific training instruction to members in question and will NOT be conducted in conjunction with a regular

firearms qualification session. However, nothing prevents a certified firearms instructor from conducting a remedial training session at the same time and location as a regular firearms qualification session, as long as the remedial training session is being conducted separate from the regular firearms qualification session. Remedial training will not exceed 5 days (40 hours). If the member fails to achieve a qualifying score during the remedial training session, he or she will be relieved of his or her firearms, placed on alternate duty in accordance with DHSMV Management Manual Policy #3.03, and ultimately removed, permanently, from law enforcement classification for inability to perform job duties. The remedial training curriculum will be established by the Florida Highway Patrol Training Academy and approved by the Director. All firearms instructors will be familiar with the remedial training curriculum and must strictly adhere to said protocol. **(NOTE: Upon a member's failure to achieve a qualifying score during his or her firearms qualification session, the member will NOT resume official law enforcement duties until he or she has successfully qualified with the service handgun. For the purpose of this policy, remedial training is not to be considered official law enforcement duties.)** Reserve members and sworn auxiliary members who fail to achieve a qualifying score during a firearms qualification session shall also attend a remedial training session, as mentioned above. If the reserve member or sworn auxiliary member fails to achieve a qualifying score during the remedial training session, he or she will be permanently removed from law enforcement classification for inability to perform job duties. All aspects of the procedures outlined in this paragraph will be documented.

## 2. Other Issued Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons

Members, reserve members, and sworn auxiliary members issued a secondary, covert or supplemental firearm or a less lethal weapon must demonstrate proficiency with that firearm/weapon annually. Any member, reserve member, or sworn auxiliary member who fails to demonstrate proficiency shall be immediately relieved of the firearm/weapon. If the firearm is required for a special assignment, such as TRT, the member will be immediately removed from that special assignment. The Troop Commander will decide whether to provide remedial training and allow the member another opportunity to qualify. In no case will be member be reissued or permitted to carry the firearm/weapon until they have demonstrated proficiency with the firearm.

## E. FIREARMS SAFETY RULES

Firearms safety rules shall be strictly adhered to during firearms qualifications/training. Each member shall remember that safety comes first during training. The following rules, as well as those that may be adopted by each troop, shall be followed.

1. Treat all guns as though they are loaded.
2. Never point a firearm at anyone unless you are justified in using that weapon.
3. Carelessness and/or horseplay will not be tolerated during firearms training.
4. Immediately upon picking up a firearm, open the cylinder or chamber and check to see that it is unloaded, check it again.
5. Never give a firearm to, or receive a firearm from, anyone unless the cylinder or action is open.
6. Never anticipate a command.
7. Be sure there is no obstruction in the barrel of a firearm before loading.
8. Never go in front of the line of fire until the firing line has been cleared and the command is given to go forward.
9. Never carry a loaded firearm on the range except when on the firing line.
10. Never dry fire on the range, except under the supervision of an instructor.
11. Pay strict attention to the range officer. He/she will instruct you as to exactly what you are to do.
12. At the conclusion of any firearms training, each participant shall ensure that his/her firearm(s) are loaded and ready for deployment before returning to duty or driving a patrol car.